

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, EFIN, CZ, US

SUBJECT: CZECH CLAIMS SETTLEMENT

1. FOLLOWING EDITORIAL ENTITLED QUOTE SEN. GRAVEL 'INS O'E
UNQUOTE APPEARED IN WASHINGTON POST ON DECEMBER 30:

QUOTE THE SENATE DID A SEAMY LITTLE THING IN CUTTING
CZECHOSLOVAKIA OUT OF THE BENEFITS OF THE TRADE REFORM
ACT LAST WEEK. IT RULED THAT THE CZECHS WOULD NOT RECEIVE
EQUAL TARIFF TREATMENT AND ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT CREDITS,
AND WOULD NOT GET BACK 18 TONS OF CZECH GOLD HELD HERE
SINCE WORLD WAR II, UNTIL PRAGUE PAYS 100 CENTS ON THE
DOLLAR FOR SOME \$50 MILLION WORTH OF AMERICAN PROPERTY
NATIONALIZED IN THE WAKE OF THE WAR. OTHER EAST EUROPEAN
COUNTRIES HAVE PAID 40 CENTS ON SIMILAR CLAIMS. THE
REASON FOR THIS TAWDRY ACT OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST
CZECHOSLOVAKIA SEEMS TO LIE ENTIRELY IN THE DEEP SYMPATHY
FELT FOR ONE CLAIMANT, ARIS GLOVES OF CALIFORNIA, BY SEN.
MIKE GRAVEL (D-ALASKA). IT WAS HIS AMENDMENT THAT WAS
FIRST PASSED BY THE SENATE AND THEN SUSTAINED BY THE CON-
FERENCE IN THE FINAL BILL.

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NOW, FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF AMERICAN REALPOLITIK, CZECHO-

SLOVAKIA WEIGHS VERY LITTLE. IT'S A SMALL CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRY WHICH POPS INTO CONSCIOUSNESS ONLY EVERY 10 OR 20 YEARS, USUALLY AT MOMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL PAIN OR

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MISFORTUNE WHICH UNDERLINE THE VULNERABILITY OF INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY IN SMALL CENTRAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. BUT THAT IS JUST THE POINT. ONCE AGAIN, IN A FASHION NO LESS MEAN FOR BEING MODEST AND BEYOND THE CONCERN OF MOST PEOPLE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS BEING VICTIMIZED THROUGH NO FAULT OF ITS OWN. ONE CLAIMANT WITH ACCESS TO ONE SENATOR HAS CLEVERLY SEEN A WAY TO SQUEEZE SOME EXTRA BUCKS OUT OF AN ANTIQUE CLAIM THAT HAD LONG BEEN ALL BUT FORGOTTEN. CONGRATULATIONS, SEN. GRAVEL, ON JOINING THE LONG LINE OF THOSE WHO HAVE STUCK IT TO THE CZECHS. UNQUOTE

2. FACTUAL ARTICLE ON CLAIMS SETTLEMENT PROBLEM ALSO APPEARED IN WASHINGTON POST OF DECEMBER 25. ARTICLE POUCHED TO POST ON DECEMBER 26. SISCO

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